

## Section 12: Road Test

This test evaluates your ability to safely operate a commercial vehicle in a variety of driving circumstances. You will drive over a test route that includes specific driving situations. At all times during the test, you must drive in a safe and responsible manner. The test should take 30 to 45 minutes to complete.

**THIS SECTION COVERS:**  
- General Driving Behaviors  
- Scored Maneuvers

During the test, you will follow the directions of the examiner. Directions will be given to you so you will have plenty of time to do what the examiner has asked. You will not be asked to drive in an unsafe manner.

If your test route does not have certain traffic situations, you may be asked to simulate a traffic situation. You will do this by telling the examiner what you are or would be doing if you were in that traffic situation.

You will be evaluated on the safe driving practices discussed in this manual, and on how well you perform the following maneuvers:

- Left and right turns,
- Driving through intersections,
- Driving and making lane changes on urban streets, and freeways or rural highways,
- Driving, stopping, and starting on downgrades and upgrades,
- Driving on curved roadways,
- Observing weight, clearance, or speed restrictions,
- Driving over railroad crossings.

You will fail the road test if any of the following occur:

- Accumulation of too many driving errors,
- Causing an accident,
- Refusal to perform a maneuver,
- Being dangerously inexperienced,
- Committing a serious traffic law violation,
- Committing a dangerous action, or
- If the examiner must provide assistance.

After you pass your skills test, the results will be faxed to the Idaho Transportation Department where they will be entered on your driving record. Please allow 24 hours to complete this process. You can then return to your Sheriff's office to get your CDL.

**Note:** If you do not successfully complete any portion of the skills test, you must wait three days before re-taking the test. You must obtain another skills test receipt from the Sheriff's office and make another appointment with a Third Party Tester. You may re-take tests as many times as needed to obtain a CDL.

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You will be scored on your overall performance in the following general driving behavior categories:

### **12.1 GENERAL DRIVING BEHAVIORS**

#### **Clutch Usage** (for manual transmission)

- Always use the clutch to shift.
- Double-clutch if vehicle is equipped with non-synchronized transmission.
- Do not ride clutch to control speed, coast with the clutch depressed, or "pop" the clutch.

### **Gear Usage** (for both manual and automatic transmissions)

- Do not grind, clash, or miss gears.
- Select gear that does not rev or lug engine.

### **Brake Usage**

- Do not ride or pump brake.
- Brake smoothly.

### **Proper steering**

- Keep both hands on the steering wheel, with both hands on opposite sides of the wheel.
- Do not 'palm' the wheel or use the spokes to steer.
- Do not over or under-control the vehicle.

### **Lane Usage**

- Do not put vehicle over curbs, sidewalks, or lane markings.
- Stop behind stop lines, crosswalks, or outside of intersections if no lines are present.
- Complete turns in the proper lane on a multiple lane road. Vehicle should finish a left turn in the lane directly to the right of the center line and should finish a right turn in the right-most (curb) lane.
- Move to or remain in right-most lane unless lane is blocked.

### **Obey All Traffic Laws**

- Wear your safety belt.
- Obey all traffic signs, signals, and laws.

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The following maneuvers will be scored.

### **12.2 SCORED MANEUVERS - Left and Right Turns**

When you are asked to make a turn:

- Check traffic in all directions.
- Use proper turn signals and safely move into the lane needed for the turn.

As you approach the turn:

- Use turn signal to warn others of your turn at least 100 feet before the turn.
- Slow down smoothly, change gears as needed to keep power, but do not coast.

If you must stop before making the turn:

- Come to a smooth stop.
- Stop behind the stop line, crosswalk, or outside of the intersection if no lines are present.
- If stopping behind another vehicle, allow a safe gap by stopping where you can see the rear tires on the vehicle ahead of you where they touch the ground.
- Do not let your vehicle roll.
- Keep the front wheels aimed straight ahead.

When ready to turn:

- Check traffic in all directions.
- Keep both hands on the steering wheel during the turn, except when shifting.
- Shift gears smoothly and whenever necessary.
- Check your mirror to make sure the vehicle does not hit anything on the inside of the turn.
- Your vehicle should not move into oncoming traffic or over curbs.
- Turn into the correct lane (left lane to left lane or right lane to right lane).

Completing the turn:

- Make sure your turn signal is off.
- Get up to speed of traffic, use turn signal, and move into right-most lane when safe to do so (if not already there).
- Check traffic in all directions.

As you approach an intersection:

#### **- Intersections**

- Check traffic thoroughly in all directions.
- Decelerate gently.
- Brake smoothly and, if necessary, change gears without coasting.
- If necessary, come to a complete stop behind any stop lines, crosswalks, or outside the intersection if no lines are present. If stopping behind another vehicle, allow a safe gap by stopping where you can see the rear tires on the vehicle ahead of you where they touch the ground.
- Do not allow your vehicle to roll forward or backward.

When driving through an intersection:

- Check traffic thoroughly in all directions.
- Yield to any pedestrians and traffic in the intersection.
- Do not change lanes while proceeding through the intersection.
- Do not shift gears when travelling through the intersection unless getting started from a stop.
- Keep both hands on the wheel.

Once through the intersection:

- Continue checking traffic.
- Accelerate smoothly and change gears as necessary.

You will be required to drive in an urban setting. You will also be required to drive in a rural setting, or if a freeway is available, you must drive on the freeway. You are expected to:

#### **- Urban and Rural Driving**

- Make regular traffic checks.
- Maintain a safe following distance.
- Your vehicle should be centered in the proper lane (usually the right-most lane).
- Keep up with the flow of traffic but do not exceed the posted speed limit.

During the multiple lane portion of the urban and rural sections, you will be asked to change lanes to the left, and then back to the right. You should make the necessary traffic checks first, then use proper signals, smoothly change lanes when it is safe to do so, maintain proper spacing, and cancel your turn signals when finished.

If a freeway is available, you must drive on it for several miles.

## - Freeways

Before entering the freeway:

- Check traffic.
- Use and cancel proper signals.
- Merge smoothly into the proper lane of traffic.

Once on the freeway:

- Continue to check traffic thoroughly in all directions.
- Maintain proper lane positioning, vehicle spacing, and vehicle speed.

When you are instructed to change lanes:

- You must make necessary traffic checks.
- Use and cancel proper signals.
- Change lanes smoothly when it is safe to do so.
- Maintain proper spacing.

When exiting the freeway:

- Make necessary traffic checks.
- Use and cancel proper signals.
- Decelerate smoothly in the exit lane.
- Once on the exit ramp, you must continue to decelerate within the lane markings and maintain adequate spacing between your vehicle and other vehicles.

As you approach an upgrade:

## - Drive Upgrade

- Select the proper gear to maintain speed and not lug the engine.
- Check traffic thoroughly in all directions and move to the right-most or curb lane.
- Use four-way flashers if traveling at greatly reduced speed compared to the flow of traffic.

Your knowledge of safe driving on downgrades will be tested both verbally and by actually driving on a downgrade or going through the motions on a section of road with low traffic usage.

## - Drive Downgrade

- Before starting down the grade, test the brakes by gently applying the foot brake to ensure they function properly.
- Check traffic periodically in all directions and move to the right-most or curb lane.
- Use four-way flashers if traveling at greatly reduced speed compared to the flow of traffic.
- Downshift as needed **before** starting down the grade to help control engine speed. Increase following distance and observe the following downhill braking procedures:
  - Select a "safe" speed, one that is not too fast for the weight of the vehicle, length and steepness of the grade, weather, and road conditions.
  - Once a "safe" speed has been reached, apply the brake hard enough to feel a definite slowdown.
  - When speed has been reduced to 5 m.p.h. below the "safe" speed, release the brakes. [This application should last for about 3 seconds.]
  - Once speed has increased to the "safe" speed, repeat the procedure.

**For example,** if your "safe" speed is 40 m.p.h., you should apply the brakes once your vehicle speed reaches 40 m.p.h. Your brakes should be applied hard enough to reduce your speed to 35 m.p.h. Once your vehicle speed reaches 35 m.p.h., release your brakes. Repeat this procedure as often as necessary until you have reached the end of the downgrade. This braking technique is called "snubbing."

When operating any commercial vehicle, do not ride the clutch, race the engine, change gears, or coast while driving down the grade. At the bottom of the grade, be sure to cancel your four-way flashers.

For these maneuvers, you will be asked to pull your vehicle over to the side of the road and stop as if you were going to get out and check something on your vehicle.

**- Upgrade Stop and  
Downgrade Stop**

As you prepare for the stop:

- Check traffic.
- Activate your right turn signal.
- Decelerate smoothly, brake evenly, change gears as necessary.
- Bring your vehicle to a full stop without coasting.

Once stopped:

- Vehicle must be parallel and within 18 inches of the curb or shoulder of the road, not rolling, and be safely out of the traffic flow.
- Vehicle should not be blocking driveways, fire hydrants, etc.
- Cancel your turn signal.
- Activate your four-way emergency flashers.
- Apply the parking brake.
- Move the gear shift to neutral or park.
- Remove your feet from the brake and clutch pedals.

When instructed to resume:

- Check traffic and your mirrors thoroughly in all directions.
- Turn off your four-way flashers.
- Activate the left turn signal.
- When traffic permits, you should release the parking brake and merge into traffic without rolling backward or coasting.
- Do not turn the wheel before your vehicle moves.
- Check traffic from all directions, especially to the left.
- Accelerate smoothly into the proper lane when safe to do so.
- Once your vehicle is back into the flow of traffic, cancel your left turn signal.

When approaching a curve:

**- Curve**

- Before entering the curve, reduce speed so further braking or shifting is not required in the curve.
- Keep vehicle in the lane.
- Continue checking traffic in all directions.

Before reaching the crossing:

**- Railroad Crossing**

- Decelerate, brake smoothly, and shift gears as necessary.
- Look and listen for the presence of trains.
- Check traffic in all directions.
- Obey all laws pertaining to your vehicle or load.

You do not have to stop, but must slow down and carefully check for hazards:

- At street car crossings,
- At railroad tracks used only for industrial switching within a business district,
- Where a policeman or flagman is directing traffic,
- If a traffic signal shows green, and
- At crossings marked as "exempt" or "abandoned."

When crossing the tracks, do not stop, change gears, pass another vehicle, or change lanes.

If you are driving a bus, a school bus, or a vehicle displaying hazardous materials placards, you should be prepared to observe the following procedures at every railroad crossing (unless the crossing is exempt):

- As the vehicle approaches a railroad crossing, activate the four-way flashers.
- Stop the vehicle within 50 feet but not less than 15 feet from the nearest rail.
- Listen and look in both directions along the track for an approaching train and for signals indicating the approach of a train. If operating a bus, you may also be required to open the window and door prior to crossing tracks.
- Keep hands on the steering wheel as the vehicle crosses the tracks.
- Do not stop, change gears, or change lanes while any part of your vehicle is proceeding across the tracks.
- Four-way flashers should be deactivated after the vehicle crosses the tracks.

(Not all driving road test routes will have a railroad crossing. You may be asked to explain and demonstrate the proper railroad crossing procedures to the examiner at a simulated location.)

After driving under an overpass, you may be asked to tell the examiner what the posted clearance or height was. After going over a bridge, you may be asked to tell the examiner what the posted weight limit was. If your test route does not have a bridge or overpass, you may be asked about another traffic sign. When asked, be prepared to identify and explain to the examiner any traffic sign which may appear on the route.

**- Bridge/Overpass/  
Restriction Sign**

***Good luck on your tests!***